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FOR GOD AND COUNTRY

June 1999

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by Donald Lambro



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THE AMERICAN LEGION

Vol. 146, No. 6

The Magazine for a Strong America

JUNE 1999

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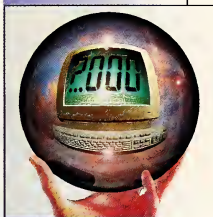
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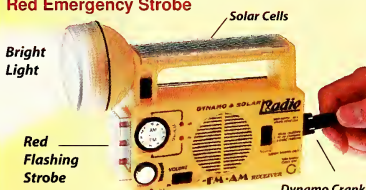
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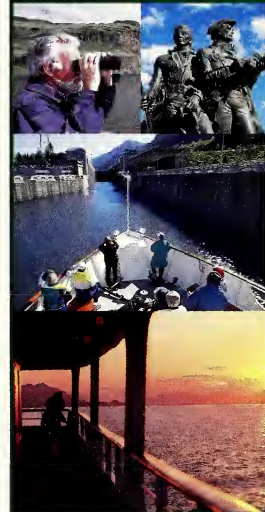
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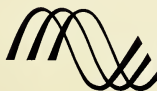
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Senate Close to Vote on Flag Protection

WASHINGTON – The Senate Judiciary Committee's Subcommittee on the Constitution, Federalism and Property Rights has approved a measure allowing Congress to protect Old Glory. The 5-3 approval came April 21, bringing the Senate nearer another vote on a proposed constitutional amendment to protect the American flag from desecration. Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Orrin Hatch, R-Utah, said at a hearing April 20 that he was optimistic of Senate approval this year.

"I believe we can hit the 67 votes," Hatch told a packed hearing room with 14 U.S. flags displayed. "I'm willing to bet that if this passed both houses of Congress, it will be one of the quickest ratified constitutional amendments in history."

"The American flag symbolizes the love of liberty that Americans hold so dear in all of our hearts," said Hatch, who wore a flag pin on his lapel. "It is the government's special responsibility to foster and protect that love of liberty. When, however, the American government itself sanctions the physical destruction of the American flag, it also sanctions the destruction of Americans' love and respect for liberties the flag stands for."

Retired Maj. Gen. Patrick Brady, chairman of the 130-member Citizens Flag Alliance, testified of the flag's special meaning and urged its protection. Brady evoked the popular movie "Saving Private Ryan."

"If Private Ryan's saviors heard that they died on America's battlefields so that their flag could be burned on America's street corners, they would turn over in their graves," Brady told the committee. "They understood how precious free speech is; they died for it. And those who will serve in Kosovo may die for it as well. What neither would understand is that defeating on the American flag is speech." The proposed amendment would take power over the flag away from the courts and give it to Congress, Brady said, restoring the people's ability to protect it.

Old Glory Saves POWs. Retired Lt. Gen. Edward Baca told the story of fel-



Retired Lt. Gen. Edward Baca holds the flag used by a POW to possibly save himself and others from being bombed by American planes.

low New Mexican Jose Quintero, who fought with his National Guard unit in World War II's Pacific theater until being captured in May 1942. While in prison camp, Quintero began to scrounge material: a red blanket, white bed sheets and blue dungarees. He fashioned them into a flag with the help of a Canadian soldier, Baca said, giving Quintero hope and inspiration.

A few weeks before the war's end, Baca said, Quintero heard U.S. bombers approaching the camp. Quintero waved his flag, possibly saving the lives of the American POWs, and the pilot tipped his wing in acknowledgment.

As he finished his speech, Baca stood up and unfurled Quintero's flag, waving it at the senators and speaking passionately. "I know he's sorry that Mr. Quintero himself could not be here today to tell you his story," Baca said. "But I do bring a message from him. He said, Mr. Chairman, to ask you and the members of the committee to please not let anyone dishonor the American flag."

Another witness for the amendment, Maribeth Seely, a fifth-grade teacher from Branchville, N.J., told about a student who asked her, "Why do schools teach respect for the flag if there is no law to protect it?"

"Austin is only 11 but he asks a very important question," Seely testified. "Why do teachers instruct students to take off their hats and stand when the American flag passes in front of them when your own government has not seen fit to pass a flag amendment? We have laws against acts of hatred. What about hatred for our country and our flag?"

Richard Parker, a Harvard Law School professor, also testified in favor of the amendment, while Sens. John Ashcroft, R-Mo., and Bob Smith, R-N.H., offered their comments in favor of protecting Old Glory.

The Department of Justice opposes the measure, but pulled its witness since he was scheduled to appear on the same panel as others. American Legion National Commander Butch Miller condemned President Clinton for opposing the resolution despite telling the Legion in 1991 he favored it.

"A piece of cloth – of no value? Is that their position?" Miller asked in a news release. "God help our nation if it is their final testament that the flag that may drape the coffins of some of our sons and daughters is just a piece of cloth in their eyes."

– Lucas Wall



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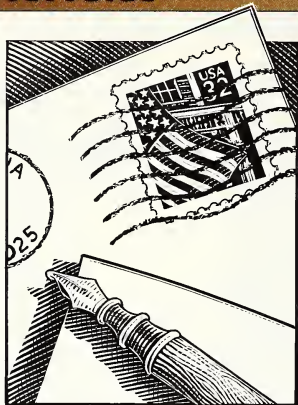
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[WALL-KNIF 6/90]



WE WANT YOUR OPINIONS

The American Legion Magazine welcomes letters concerning articles that appear in the publication. Letter writers are also encouraged to submit photographs of themselves for possible publication with their letters. Be sure to include your hometown and a daytime phone number for verification. All letters are subject to editing. Send your opinions to:

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Net Importance

I APPLAUD your magazine and its use of the Internet. Commander Miller's message for all Departments to use the Internet and e-mail has been long in coming ("A Net Gain," March).

As a demonstration for a local reporter, I recalled the name of a fellow GI that I haven't seen or corresponded with since 1946. Knowing what state he had been from, we searched there first. I found the telephone number of the first name on the list. A lady answered, and I told her I was searching for (name) who had served with me in World War II. She said, "Just a minute." Voila! Contact was

made between two former comrades.

Over time, we have put together many others who have long wondered what had happened to a particular comrade. In the admonition in the final paragraph of that story, Commander Miller cautions "not to write off veterans of World War II or Korea." That's so true. We find more every day.

Bill Endicott, Mill Creek, Wash.

Freedom Cutback?

I'M SHOCKED to read that Secretary of Defense William Cohen stated that Americans must accept less freedom ("Washington Watch," March).

Cohen must not have served in the same DoD that I did. My oath of office said I would uphold and defend the Constitution from enemies both foreign and domestic.

W. Weese, Nashville, Tenn.

Thanks For The Hire

I WISH TO SEND my deepest and most sincere thanks to all with whom I dealt at Hire Quality. You have given me hope where recently there was none.

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Thanks for helping when nobody else would. I hope everyone who contacts Hire Quality has the same kind of luck that I did.

*Edmond M. Wolfkamp,
Mount Airy, N.C.*

Correction

IN THE ARTICLE, "Star Spangled Baltimore" (March), you identified the Coast Guard cutter *Taney* as *USS Taney*. "USS" is the designation for a Navy vessel. The proper identification should be *USCGC Taney*. As a former crewmember, I thought you might want to correct this.

Bob Ewell, Edwards, Miss. □



Look Deeper

YOUR ARTICLE, "No More Task Force Smiths" (April), only scratches the surface of the truth. More than 20 years ago, we tried to tell members of Congress they were "penny smart and dollar stupid."

While trying to create an all-volunteer force, they failed to realize that the new recruits were

smarter and better qualified. As Congress continued to cut promised benefits to the military retirees, a military career became less desirable. Today's recruit stays three or four years, gets very good technical training, then gets out.

Here are his reasons to leave: better pay from civilian companies and no field training; Congress can change his benefits whenever it feels like it; if he's injured in combat, he will be required to surrender his disability pay from his earned retirement pay.

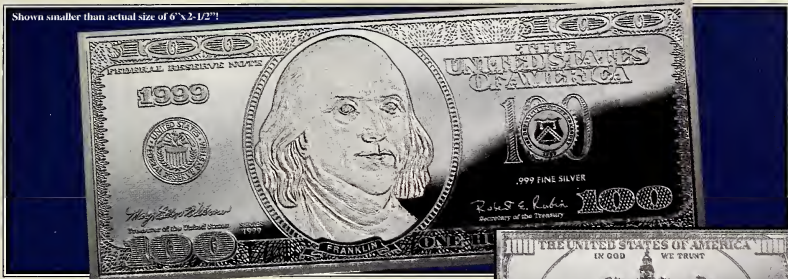
What good are 1,000 planes if you have only 500 pilots?

Jules Goetz, Summerfield, Fla.

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SLEEP DEPRIVATION CAN BE DANGEROUS

According to the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety, sleep-deprived drivers are vulnerable to "micro-naps" lasting four or five seconds—plenty of time at highway speeds for a fatal crash to occur. Disrupted sleep and sleep disorders cost American businesses billions of dollars annually in lost productivity, industrial accidents and higher medical bills. Lack of sleep also was implicated in the Exxon Valdez oil spill, the space shuttle Challenger disaster and the nuclear accident at Three Mile Island.

Loss of sleep during the night is responsible for increased vulnerability to illness, a tendency to nod off at work the next day, and even loss of creativity and clarity of thinking, say British researchers. Power tools can become dangerous weapons in the hands of someone who is not well rested. And almost everyone is familiar with the physical aches and pains that occur because of poor quality sleep.

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Standing for Old Glory

LOOKING FORWARD to victory in the 106th Congress, the nearly 4 million proud members of The American Legion family have done right by their flag.

As I write this, **House Joint Resolution 33**, the flag protection amendment bill, has not come to the floor of the House for a vote, nor has its counterpart, **Senate Joint Resolution 14**. But the votes will come, and, like Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Sen. Orrin Hatch, R-Utah, I believe we will win this year!

June marks the 10th anniversary of the Supreme Court ruling in *Texas v. Johnson*, a narrow 5-4 decision that overturned nearly 200 years of judicial and legislative precedent by ruling that flag desecration was free speech, and thus protected under the First Amendment.

That outrageous decision gave rise to a passionate crusade by millions of Americans working at the grassroots who determined to stand up and affirm their values by saying, "No!" to desecrating America's unique symbol of

and intellectual arguments on Old Glory's behalf.

All the arguments have been offered for and against this constitutional amendment. Everyone has had a say, from constitutional scholars to street-corner orators, and from distinguished members of Congress to the men and women who put them there.

There is no need to repeat those arguments here. This fight is not about preserving inalienable rights of speech, assembly or worship, among others. Informed citizens who take time to study this flag amendment issue know they have no need to fear the loss of these hard-won, precious freedoms. You and I took a solemn oath to preserve, protect and defend those freedoms when we entered our country's service.

We did the right thing then, just as we're doing the right thing now in continuing to persuade members of Congress to vote in favor of a flag amendment.

So, what's the flag amendment campaign really all about?

It turns out it's about a lot of things.

The *Texas v. Johnson* ruling, as misguided as it is, may come to be seen as a blessing because it sparked a reaction in grassroots America that ignited a debate about our values, about what we as a nation hold dear and the legacy of pride and reverence for the flag we want to hand down to our children and grandchildren. It's about not mistaking the freedom to speak one's mind in a democracy for the sort of hate-filled, socially corrosive conduct embodied in acts of flag desecration. It's about making your voices heard and putting your money where your mouth is.

But what this campaign is really all about is restoring the people's right to decide whether they want the American flag protected from acts of physical desecration. For those of us who believe the flag is not merely a national symbol but *the* symbol for all that America stands for, there is no other course but to fight on.



We'll win in Congress and this flag amendment will be ratified in record time by the required 38 states (three-fourths).

I believe in it on an intellectual level, as well as an emotional level. I have friends whose names are on the Vietnam Wall, kids who fought under our flag and sacrificed their future for our tomorrow. Who speaks for them? I'm sure many Legionnaires have a similar tie to lost comrades or family members.

There are uncounted thousands of American patriots in hometown cemeteries and at rest under white crosses in fields across the ocean whose beliefs could not save them, but who were, nonetheless, willing to sacrifice all for their buddies and whose beliefs embodied in their country's flag.

Who speaks for them? If we don't, my friends, who will?

It's taken us 10 years to persuade most in Congress that protecting the flag is the right thing to do. The same flag that's a daily fixture in our lives as it flies in front of schools, homes and businesses also graces the caskets of deceased veterans and serves as the nation's bequest to their loved ones.

We must follow their example of selfless service.

We know protecting the flag is the right thing to do. And for our nation to survive and continue to prosper, we need more selfless acts of dedication, and less selfish acts of desecration. □

**"We know
protecting the
flag is the right
thing to do."**

freedom and national identity. The outrage Americans felt following that ruling has simmered into a stony resolve to see the Citizens Flag Alliance movement through to victory.

The 10-year battle for passage of a constitutional remedy to the court's disgraceful action in *Texas v. Johnson* convinced millions of Americans that their initial emotional response to acts of flag desecration – to view it as no more than hateful conduct – has been reinforced by potent constitutional



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Vice President Al Gore greets Tennessee Legionnaires including Department Commander Perry D. Roberts, Department Adjutant A. Mike Hammer and Past National Vice Commander Ralph Reel.

'QUALITY TIME' IN D.C.

Active-duty concerns, legislative action rally troops at the 39th Washington Conference.

**By Anthony Miller
Contributing Editor**



NATIONAL Commander Harold "Butch" Miller was presiding over the last major event of the three-day Washington Conference, a luncheon honoring statesman and 1996 presidential candidate Alan Keyes.

Miller mentioned a sampling of Keyes' intellectual and career achievements — Harvard Ph.D., top jobs in the U.S. Foreign Service, author of

numerous books and influential conservative activist — before introducing him as the 1999 recipient of the National Commander's Public Relations Award.

Throughout his introduction before 1,000 Legionnaires and their guests in a Hyatt Regency hotel ballroom, Miller repeated the phrase, "Never underestimate your impact on young people."

The remark was uniquely appropriate to Keyes, who, among other distinctions holds the honor of being the first young man to

win the National High School Oratorical final and serve as Boys Nation president, all in the same year. For Keyes, the year was 1967.

A variation of that theme sounded repeatedly during the 39th Washington Conference, March 22-24. Experts from government, the military and academia shared their updates and insights with Legionnaires at various commission meetings conducted March 22.

Political leaders such as Vice



National Commander "Butch" Miller presents the National Commander's Public Relations Award to Alan Keyes.



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"We are closing no medical centers this year and we have no plans to close any medical centers next year. If you find a VA official who says so, you tell me and I will deal with it then and there."

— VA Secretary
Togo D. West Jr.



President Al Gore, Sens. Orrin Hatch, R-Utah, and Max Cleland, D-Ga., attended the Legislative Rally on Tuesday, March 23.

Speaking to Legionnaires, Gore, a member of Post 57 in Carthage, Tenn., defended the administration's VA budget for 2000, a budget veterans' advocates have roundly criticized for failing to even keep up with medical inflation, veterans' medical care and the escalating need for long-term care for the aging veterans population.

Gore admitted the "tough constraints" imposed by the Balanced Budget Act of 1997 has fostered discontent among veterans' organizations upset at VA's flat-line budget, a no-growth prospect not destined to improve under current administration plans.

"Just last week, I met in the White House with the executive director of your Washington office, John Sommer, and other leading veterans' advocates, to talk about what we can do to improve veterans' benefits. We hear your concerns loud and clear — and we're going to work very closely with you on these issues," Gore promised.

Gore also pledged to safeguard Social Security and Medicare, the object of fierce debate in Congress. He endorsed the Medicare subvention projects under a plan allowing veterans to use their Medicare dollars for care at

VA facilities.

Opening the VA health-care system to third-party payers such as Medicare has long been one of the pillars of The American Legion's GI Bill of Health, the Legion's comprehensive reform proposal for VA.

Friendly Reminder. Miller reminded Legionnaires at the Legislative Rally that, like their influence on young people, they should never underestimate the power their personal visits with lawmakers have.

Miller noted the conference was occurring at a critical time in the campaign for passage of flag amendment measures House Joint Resolution 33 and Senate Joint Resolution 14. Many Legionnaires wore their blue caps later that day and packed the Rayburn House Office Building on Capitol Hill for the subcommittee hearing on H.J. Res. 33.

Old Glory's power as a unique symbol of freedom recognized worldwide was apparent in the wrenching testimony of death camp survivor Stephan Ross. In his testimony, Ross told of the



Rep. Floyd Spence gestures in discussions with Army Brig. Gen. Terry L. Tucker, and fellow South Carolinians Milford A. Forrester, left, and Past National Commander E. Roy Stone Jr.



During a subcommittee hearing on House Joint Resolution 33, Nazi death camp survivor Stephan Ross holds up an American flag given to him by one of the U.S. soldiers who helped free him.

American tank commander who helped liberate him from a Nazi death camp. The soldier gave him food and a handkerchief to dry his tears.

"It was only later, after he had gone," Ross recalled, "that I realized that his handkerchief was a small American flag, the first I had ever seen. It became my flag of redemption and freedom." Displaying the small flag and other items from his captivity for subcommittee members, Ross said his appreciation of the flag is coupled with gratitude and admiration for those who found and freed him from captivity.

"Freedom is not free, ladies and gentlemen," he said.

Others testifying on behalf of the amendment included Maj. Gen. Patrick Brady, chairman of the Citizens Flag Alliance, and former Miss America, Shawntel Smith.

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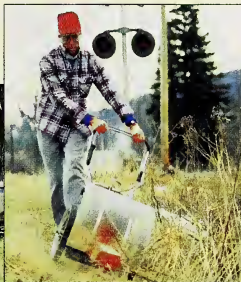
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National Commander Miller honors The American Legion's VA Voluntary Service "Worker of the Year," Jason Tomlinson, a 24-year member of Post 16 in Lynchburg, Va., left.

Togo D. West Jr., and Dr. Kenneth W. Kizer, VA's under-secretary for health, were among guests at the 76th National VA&R Conference, March 22.

West, former secretary of the Army, started by citing scouting as an early influence in his life, and he praised The American Legion for its youth programs before moving on to "VA's report card."

West didn't discuss or defend the administration's fiscal 2000 budget, which encountered near universal reproach from government and veterans' groups when unveiled earlier this year.

Members of the House Veterans Affairs Committee have recommended nearly \$2 billion in additional funding for VA just to maintain present services and keep up with medical care inflation and new mandated care areas, such as providing treatment to veterans with Hepatitis C.

West was anxious to squelch closure rumors he'd heard. He said VA "has closed no VETS centers, and we have no plans to do so." These clinics bring needed medical, counseling and job referral services to Vietnam and other veterans in a neighborhood, storefront setting.

Rumor No. 2, rumblings

about closing VA medical centers, prompted this pledge from the secretary: "We are closing no medical centers this year and we have no plans to close any medical centers next year. If you find a VA official who says so, you tell me and I will deal with it then and there," West said.

West also said VA is working to be more responsive to veterans' growing demand for long-term care. He said VA is aware that 36 percent of America's veterans are 65 or older, three times the national average for the civilian sector's patient mix.

Bringing Them Home. American MIAs and military readiness were the top items on the agenda for the National Security and Foreign Relations Commissions. Army Brig. Gen. Terry L. Tucker, commander of the Joint Task Force for Full Accounting, briefed the commissions on the progress his unit has made in bringing Americans home.

"Since January 1992, 289 sets of remains have been repatriated from Vietnam, 135 from Laos and 41 from Cambodia. Of these, 203 have been completely identified," Tucker said. Nevertheless, Tucker acknowledged that many American ser-

Senior NCOs Share Profile of Today's Service Members

FOR Legionnaires intent on going that extra mile to recruit younger veterans, the journey often begins with acquiring the prospecting skills that will lead to their desired destination: membership success.

The 39th Washington Conference included a unique forum comprising Department adjutants and senior NCOs from the public affairs section of each service branch, seasoned pros who offered the adjutants insights into quality of life and other concerns shared by today's active duty personnel.

The panel included Sgt. Maj. Richard A. Czizik, Army; Sgt. Maj. Thomas M. McNamara Jr., Army National Guard; Master Sgt. John C. "Jack" Harrison, Air Force; Sgt. Maj. Alford L. McMichael, Marines; and Command Master Chief Diane M. Buccici, Coast Guard.

The profile of active duty personnel doesn't fit that of the typical GI from the World War II, Korea or Vietnam periods, the NCOs told the adjutants.

"When I was 18, back in 1960, it wasn't a question of 'if I would go in the service, but 'when,' and that's not the case any more," said Sgt. Maj. Thomas M. McNamara, who counts membership in The American Legion among his many professional and fraternal affiliations.

There are still patriotic young Americans willing to serve, but competition is tough, according to McNamara. He said the services face daunting challenges recruiting quality young people, in part, because of the array of options and earning potential America's youth have to choose from. The armed services share the same challenges in recruiting and retention that veterans' groups face. "One thing is for sure," said McNamara. "Ignore your members - and they'll go away."

Czizik said the Legion's winning roster of youth programs should be a prime attraction to those on active duty, since 60 percent of soldiers are married. "Our approach is that we don't re-enlist a soldier, we re-enlist a family," Czizik said.

He suggested to the adjutants that Departments work with Post officers in arranging visits to military bases. Making contact with public affairs staffs on bases is the "foot-in-the-door" Legionnaires need to start with, he said. Legionnaires must work within restrictions on access to troops imposed by the Department of Defense, for security and other reasons. Post members can't just set up shop on base and begin but-tionholing prospects.

"It has to do with marketing," Czizik said. "Try to involve active duty people in community projects, or give them an award for some project they're doing that impacts your community. That's how you make those contacts."



Air Force Master Sgt. John C. "Jack" Harrison and senior NCO colleagues from all service branches offered profiles of today's service personnel. The NCOs shared their insights on recruiting and other topics with Department adjutants at a special forum during the conference.



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Visits to congressional offices by Legionnaires are key to the Washington Conference. Legionnaires from the Empire State share legislative priorities with 20th District Rep. Ben Gilman, R-N.Y. From left are Legionnaires Rich Keiser, Post 1044; Department Vice Commander Ralph Scharf of Post 531; Gilman; Pete Stoner, Post 859 member and 9th District vice commander; and Rockland County Commander Dominick Pileggi, Post 130.

vicemen remain missing.

"The decision on how much longer we will look will come from our national leaders," he said. "In Vietnam, we have enough work to keep us busy until 2002 or 2003. In Laos (there is enough work) until 2005 or 2006."

Dino Carluccio, a senior assistant to U.S. Sen. Bob Smith, R-N.H., praised Tucker's work, but insisted more must be done, especially on the legislative front.

"We are now convinced that the laws governing release of POW-MIA intelligence reports need to be revised, and this is going to be a major feature of our forthcoming legislation, which we hope to name the POW-MIA Full Disclosure Act of 1999 – not just full disclosure by communist governments abroad, but by our own government as well," Carluccio said.

Commission members were surprised to learn that the first U.S. pilot lost during the Gulf War, Lt. Cmdr. Michael Scott Speicher, is still unaccounted for.

"The president has never instructed his administration to use all available options to demand an accounting from the government of Iraq. In fact, requests by Department of Defense officials to have this matter pursued have been placed on hold by this administration for three years now, because of the state of U.S.-Iraqi relations," Carluccio said.

have occurred to Alan Keyes as he accepted the Public Relations Award from National Commander Butch Miller.

In his emotion-filled remarks before the luncheon audience at the Hyatt, Keyes touched on his past, saying veterans had always impressed him as being special people because they willingly sacrifice for one another and the greater good.

He recalled with pride the service of his father, a 33-year Army NCO whose service included earning two purple hearts and a bronze star. Keyes said it took him many years to fully understand the unique status of American citizens who serve their nation in the armed services.

"I have never been able to doubt what this nation represents," said Keyes. "The most important thing about us is right here in this room." He repeated Miller's reminder not to underestimate the power of the good things Legion family members do for the nation's youth.

Keyes said that with time he came to understand the real lesson of America, that it extracts a price for freedom, and sometimes that price is the blood of its best young men and women.

According to Keyes, however, America offers "a chance for ordinary people to achieve the extraordinary dignity God intended for them."

John B. Raughter, executive editor of *The American Legion Magazine*, also contributed to this report.

Don't Underestimate. The scope of Legion concerns and interests must

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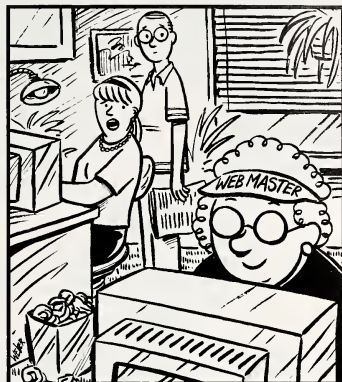
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Army Staff Sgt. Doug Solan, wife Tanya and son Baily get ready for their day.

TOM STRATTMAN

LOW-WAGE WARRIORS

America's defenders fight low pay and long hours.

By Assistant Editor Terry Coffey

IT'S BEEN a tough week for 27-year-old Tanya Solan. She's not feeling well. Her 10-month-old son, Baily, is sick. She just found out her mother has cancer. And just when she needs him, her husband, Army Staff Sgt. Doug Solan, is in the field for up to a week and a

half.

"I miss his moral support," says

Tanya. "Me finding out that my mother has cancer, I can't tell Doug about it, so he has no idea how upset I am." With Baily sick, she also misses another set of hands to help run errands and go to the doctor. Without Doug, she has to miss work, a luxury she can't afford.

This is the kind of week that Doug can do without. Military life has already cost him one family. "A lot of deployments, a lot of field time, a year in Korea. ... It cost me my previous wife because that's a lot of time away that she wasn't able to deal with." The situation was compounded by money

problems, says Solan. "We would pay our bills, pay our rent, our car payment, and we would have two weeks to make it with \$20." Solan's family survived on assistance from the Women, Infants and Children program, which provides money for food for children under 5 and their mothers.

The 28-year-old combat engineer instructor stationed at Ft. Leonard Wood, Mo., wants to make sure that doesn't happen this time. "I hope to maybe dedicate a little more time to my family."

That's easier said than done. In addition to this week-plus in the field,



Sgt. Jay Kaufman helps his teen-age stepson, Michael, work on his car. Michael works to pay for the car and other expenses.

Doug has been on funeral detail which requires travel on short notice. He works long hours, including Saturdays. And the finances aren't much better, either. Tanya works at a local car dealership, but even with the extra income, the Solans have found themselves missing house payments to deal with emergencies.

"It's \$12 for a pack of diapers," says Tanya. "Our son's bill at the grocery store, by himself, is always at least \$60 ... savings is not an option."

Doug's re-enlistment window opens next month, and he has been researching civilian jobs over the In-

ternet. What he's found is astonishing: His training and experience would garner \$45,000 to \$60,000 a year in retail management or overseas engineering jobs. That's at least twice his base salary - less than \$23,000 - and it's tempting. Even Solan's father, who retired from the Army, is advising Doug to get out.

"I want the same American dream for my family as everyone on the outside wants for their family," Doug says.

High Cost of Living. When 28-year-old Kathleen Longnecker recently returned from Anchorage, Alaska, to her parents' home in West Plains, Mo., it was a mixed blessing. On the positive side, she was back home, and her two children, 7-year-old Morgan and 7-month-old Austin, could see their grandparents. On the negative side, she had to leave behind her husband, Senior Airman Rick Longnecker, 24, who is finishing his assignment as an intelligence specialist at Elmendorf Air Force Base.

"In July, we're going to move to Davis Monthan Air Force Base (Ariz.)," says Kathleen. "I (had) to leave two months early and go home to Missouri so I could work to save enough money for deposits and relat-

ed moving expenses."

While in Anchorage, a long waiting list for base housing meant the Longneckers had to live off-post. Their small, two-bedroom apartment cost more than \$925 a month; Rick's housing allowance was around \$800.

"We were barely making ends meet," says Kathleen. "I could not afford to work, as day care was astronomical." So was everything else: A gallon of milk was more than \$5, and formula for Austin, who is allergic to milk, was running \$10 to \$20 a can. At those prices, Rick's monthly salary of slightly more than \$1,400 didn't stretch far. The Longneckers cut back on fruits and vegetables to trim grocery expenses. If not for \$150 a month from the WIC program, Kathleen says, her family would not have made it. And although they appreciated the assistance, there was an element of embarrassment.

"I wouldn't use WIC vouchers at the commissary. It was like admitting we're unable to make it," she says.

"We went to the local grocery store, and Rick never went in uniform."

Arizona, where they hope to reunite next month, may not be much better for the Longneckers. Their housing allowance will drop by \$400, but their housing cost will decrease only about \$100. In addition, Rick will lose more than \$200 in cost-of-living adjustments. That's an extra \$500 they'll need to find each month in a budget that's already running on empty.

Alternate Income.

Army Sgt. Jay Kaufman, 30, is a soldier who has had to go to extremes to support his wife, Virginia, and three kids. As a sergeant with more than 12 years in service, he makes about \$1,800 a month before taxes. Up until last year, his family received help from WIC, but that's not the worst of it: "I've (sold) plasma. I used to go twice a week, every week. I was getting about \$200 a month extra just doing that," Kaufman, a combat engineer, can't wait that expedient at Ft. Leonard Wood: "There's no plasma center

"I wouldn't use WIC vouchers at the commissary. It was like admitting we're unable to make it. We went to the local grocery store, and Rick never went in uniform."

- KATHLEEN LONGNECKER



Rick, Kathleen, Morgan and Austin Longnecker during a 1996 trip home to Missouri, for Austin's christening. The Longneckers lived in Alaska and know first-hand the crunch of living in a high-cost area.



Spc. Jason Goff, Ft. Leonard Wood, Mo., walks 4-year-old son Jonathon to the Head Start bus.

here," he says. But there are other ways to get by, including a job for his oldest stepson, 19-year-old Michael Fearing, who pays for his car and items needed for his own room.

Kaufman's co-worker, Spc. Jason Goff, 23, has also faced several financial struggles in his two-year career. Jason, his wife Bobbie, 23, and their two children, 4-year-old Jonathan and 1-year-old Matthew, live on post. Still, they require government assistance to make it on his monthly pre-tax salary of \$1,250.

"My wife can't work, because she has to baby-sit the kids ... day care is too expensive," Goff says, at least \$100 a week. Without support from WIC, he says he would not have enough money to pay the bills.

Earlier this year, the low pay almost drove Goff out of the Army. "The only thing that got me to re-enlist was a bonus," he says. Even with a combination of bonus money and bor-

"I've (sold) plasma. I used to go twice a week, every week. I was getting about \$200 a month extra just doing that."

— SGT. JAY KAUFMAN

rowing from his parents, however, Goff has barely been able to avoid the need for a second job. Spc. Nadine Brown is not so fortunate.

No Time for Sleep. After a full day as a finance specialist at Ft. Knox, Ky., the 26-year-old single mother picks up 10-month-old Jordan and 2-year-old Joshua from the sitter. After supper and maybe a couple hours of sleep for mom, it's off to United Parcel Service,

where she works as a sorter from 11 p.m. to 4 a.m. A friend who lives in the barracks sleeps over to keep an eye on the kids. In between, Brown takes classes at Elizabethtown Community College. Then, it's back home to start the entire process all over again — a grueling routine that takes its toll.

"When you're not happy, when you have stress about bills, about pay, it's tough (to concentrate on your work)."

Brown lives on post and receives

assistance from WIC, and a program that helps with day care costs. Without that help, and her second job, she says her bills would add up to more than her monthly military salary of \$1,300 (before taxes).

Brown's mother is pressuring her to get out. "She tells me, 'You're basically not making anything. Why don't



Spc. Nadine Brown and her oldest son, 2-year-old Joshua. Brown, a single mom at Ft. Knox, Ky., also has a 10-month-old son, Joshua, and works a second job to make ends meet.



In order to help pay the bills, Master Sgt. Steve Smith and his wife, Lori, operate a side business selling a car cleaning and polishing product, demonstrated by 2-year-old Grace.

you get out and find a nice job – a job that will pay you better.” When Brown’s enlistment is up in a year and a half, she plans to take her mother’s advice, and return home to New York City.

“Being in the military, I will not be able to save for my kids’ future. I am simply living day to day.”

Across the Board. It’s not just the lower enlisted and junior NCOs who are feeling the pinch. Steve Smith, who’s stationed at Randolph Air Force Base, Texas, recently put on senior master sergeant stripes. “I talk with my counterparts – those who’ve never been in the service and those who retired from the service – and they get a 10 percent pay raise one time, and their annual average is 5-7 percent.”

Smith has spent his career in Air Force broadcasting and public affairs. He has three daughters, 12-year-old Jasmine and 11-year-old Ashlee from a previous marriage, and 2-year-old Grace with his current wife, Lori.

“The finances are a challenge, and a lot of that has to do with, in San Antonio, the high cost of living.” Smith says his housing allowance comes up more than \$100 short of making his monthly house payment. “You add in the utilities and the required expenses, not even including food, and you’ve added on another \$250-\$300 a

month.” To pay the bills, Smith operates a side business selling a car cleaning and polishing product.

In addition to pay concerns, Smith also fears he will be sent overseas. He recently avoided a deployment because of an illness in his family, but knows that probably won’t happen again. He hopes he can make it to retirement before his next deployment comes.

Opposite Sides of the World. Sgt. Carrie McLeroy isn’t waiting until retirement. The combat correspondent based at Camp Pendleton, Calif., has already decided to leave the Marine Corps later this year.

“(Deployment) is probably the biggest reason,” she says. “For my daughter (4-year-old Kelleen). That was a huge factor in getting off active duty. It’s just too hard on the children, I think.”

Deployments concern McLeroy, 24, even more than most military parents, because her husband is also a Marine combat correspondent. Twenty-three-year-old Cpl. Eric McLeroy is getting ready to leave for the Middle East on a six-month deployment as part of Camp Pendleton’s 11th Marine

Expeditionary Unit. While he’s gone, Carrie will face a child-care crisis: Special duty will require her to work hours when no day care is available.

“In the past, I’ve flown a family member down from northern California, which gets expensive, or my daughter’s gone up to visit her grandparents,” Carrie explains. “This time that might not be possible, so I’m in a bind now.”

While Carrie doesn’t expect the military establishment to bend over backwards for her particular situation, she says child care needs to be addressed in a way that reflects the diversity of today’s military families. “I think ... it should be within the work sections. For example,” she says, “if they had a Marine take my morning duty, and I did their noon-time and evening duties, that’s a possibility.”

The McLeroys already cut costs by sharing a car, even though their work hours and office locations differ. Once Carrie’s enlistment is up later this year, however, they will have to cinch their belts even tighter to make Eric’s monthly salary of about \$1,400 last.

“We’re putting ourselves on the base housing list,” says Carrie. “I have a job lined up already ... I’ll be a teacher’s assistant.” And one more advantage for the civilian world: Los Angeles County provides child care to match work hours of teacher’s assistants. □

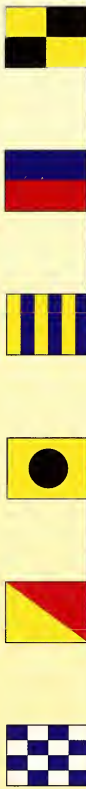
Military Pay Raises On Congressional Table

IN FEBRUARY, the U.S. Senate approved **S. 4**, which contains a 4.8 percent military pay raise beginning Jan. 1, 2000, with future increases of at least half a percentage point above private sector wage growth. In addition to across-the-board increases, **S. 4** also contains:

- **Military pay table reform.** Service members would receive increases from .1 percent to 5.5 percent depending upon rank and years in service; 75 percent would see at least some hike when the new tables take effect July 1, 2000;
- **A retirement option** allowing members with 15 years of service (five years before retirement) to choose between 50 percent of basic pay for retirement and a \$30,000 bonus;
- **A Thrift Savings Plan** allowing members to set aside 5 percent of basic pay into a tax-deferred investment account; and
- **A special subsistence allowance** of \$180 a month for members who qualify for food stamps.

Setting

CALIFORNIA'S POST 291 ENJOYS FAIR WINDS, SMOOTH SEAS AND STRONG MEMBERSHIP.
 BY ASSISTANT EDITOR LAYNE CAMERON PHOTOS BY JOHN E. SIMON



SEEING TIM BERCOVITZ, Newport Harbor Post 291, at the helm of Fairwind, is witnessing him in his element. "Skipper Tim" looks the part, clad in Greek fisherman cap and gold sail-boat necklace, zestful eyes constantly monitoring his 40-foot ketch and the rolling Pacific.

Like many skippers of all-wood sailboats, Bercovitz claims Fairwind talks to him. By listening to her, he is able to trim the sails and begin a perfectly balanced run toward Catalina Island while spinning tales of their relationship. "I was revarnishing the cap rail when someone asked what I was doing. When I told them I was removing the mildew — the blemishes — I grimaced," says Bercovitz as he kisses the mast. "I'm sorry, the beauty marks." Fairwind doesn't like to hear she has blemishes."

Legion on Parade. The American Legion Yacht Club was formed in 1966, and has been a proud extension of California's second largest Post ever since. Legionnaires have capitalized on this combination to build membership to more than 1,800 and garner publicity in rather unique fashion. Each Fourth of July, the ALYC fills the harbor with the "Old Glory Boat Parade." Nearly 200 sailboats, powerboats, electric boats and inflatables — clad in stars and stripes — show their colors to one of the largest crowds the harbor sees during the year.

The lead ship of last year's procession was Fritz Warren's 40-foot sloop. Decked out with a red, white and blue asymmetrical spinnaker and flying a 30x50 United States Flag from his mast, Warren's float drew applause equal to that of the fireworks

display. Not to be outdone, Bercovitz masqueraded as Uncle Sam.

An equally festive event hosted by the ALYC is the annual "Sail For the Visually Impaired." Twenty-seven boats were needed to accommodate the 130 guests on a three-hour tour.

Bercovitz serves as the co-chair of the event and happily turns over his ship to his guests. His decades on the water have instilled in him the knowledge of how sailing feels and how it should sound. Such intimacy, combined with his disarming tone, makes him an excellent teacher for the blind sailors. Once he turned the wheel over to his student, he instructed her to use the wind as her compass. He told her to keep the breeze on her right cheek. If it moved to her ear, she needed to ease the boat starboard. "If she felt it on her nose, the sails would luff and let her know she had gone too close to the wind," explains Bercovitz.

The Southern California Yachting Association recognized the club's effort in organizing these community events as well as staying active within the association itself. "We are the only SCYA club to have won the 'SCYA Club of the Year' award four out of the last five years," explains Ted Acre, Legion yacht club commodore.

Racing. Also factoring into the club's success is its penchant for racing. These competitions are hardly the wine-and-cheese affairs one might expect. In fact, one of the club's favorite pastimes is weekday "beer can" races. "In days gone by, people could tell there was a yacht race going on by the number of beer cans floating in the harbor," explains Bercovitz. Today, these evening races



The American Legion Yacht Club sails in close formation in California's Newport Harbor.

Sail

A full-page photograph of a man with a mustache, wearing a light blue polo shirt and white shorts, sitting at the helm of a sailboat. He is holding the wooden steering wheel. The boat is on a body of water with many other sailboats in the background under a clear blue sky. The mast and rigging of the boat are visible in the foreground and to the right.

Skipper Tim Bercovitz guides
Fairwind out of Newport
Harbor and into the Pacific.



American Legion Yacht Club Commodore Ted Acre (background) maneuvers Third Wish through harbor traffic.



build camaraderie as much as sanctioned blue-water events. Commodore Acre, for example, entered only six off-shore races last year. Yet, he competed in more than 20 beer can races.

When Bercovitz races off-shore he does so in the "ancient mariner" class. He quips that he doesn't know if they're talking about the skipper or Fairwind, which was built in 1968. The yacht club port captain's mastery

of sea and ship has netted him five first places, a handful of top-three finishes and the respect of Legion mariners.

While discussing his race résumé, a puff of wind rises. A quick glance at the tell-tales (snippets of discarded VCR tape) directs the skipper to adjust his course slightly. "I don't know where that wind came from," says Bercovitz, "but I'm glad to see it."

Heeling gently and gliding through

the water at 6 knots, Fairwind slices through a patch of bouquets and wreaths – traces of a recent burial at sea. Skipper Tim has attended a dozen such funerals, but still allows the somber scene to snatch his smile (a rare occurrence while he's sailing). "That's probably the way I'll go."

The smile soon returns, and he's back to his effervescent self – master mariner and preeminent spokesman for The American Legion Yacht Club. □



American Legion Post 291 is nestled by the Pacific Ocean and Newport Harbor. The unique location helps the Legion maintain a high profile in the community.



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Y2K

Preparing For The Unknown

When the clock strikes midnight and the year 2000 arrives, will the heavily hyped computer bug turn out to be a mere pest – or a national disaster of epic proportions?

By Jay Stuller

WITH ALL DUE respect to what some folks are forecasting for this coming Jan. 1, you'd think Doomsday would arrive with just a little more flair. After all, recent movies have featured fiery collisions with asteroids and comets. Still more spectacular stuff is found in the Bible in the book of Revelations. Thus, it would seem rather humdrum if Armageddon arrives via a computer glitch.

Bugged. However, the new millennium is presenting societies that depend on technology with an extraordinary problem. The "Y2K bug" is a flaw in many computer software programs and "embedded" microchips that are found inside engines, appliances and industrial equipment.

Programmed to identify the year only by its last two digits, the most date-sensitive systems and chips face a moment of truth when the calendar and clock hit the year 2000.

Jay Stuller, a long-time contributor to The American Legion Magazine, is already taking modest-but-prudent steps to prepare for Y2K.

Should the machines and systems think and behave as if it's 1900 instead of the new millennium, a kind of microelectronic plague could sweep across the land.

Of course, if the Y2K bug destroyed only the programming capacity of old VCRs, not much would be lost; most folks never bothered to learn that in the first place. But com-

puter technology plays some role in nearly every aspect of modern life, including transportation, telecommunications and the delivery of everything from public utilities to government benefit checks.

As a result, Y2K has generated serious anxieties for government officials, businesses and a growing number of citizens. A crescendo of media reports increasingly questions whether America is ready for a bug which in some ways poses the most serious threat to national security since the Soviet Union.

War. "We are now, in a sense, at war with Y2K," says Sen. Robert Bennett, R-Utah. As chairman of the Senate Special Committee on the Year 2000 Problem, Bennett is frustrated by public leaders who dismiss Y2K as "no big deal." In a recent essay for Y2K Today, he writes, "We need to state unequivocally that Y2K is an event that has potentially massive and unpredictable ... ramifications."

How massive? Bennett says he's "concerned about the possibility of power shortages," which themselves could wreak havoc. But Y2K pessimists claim blackouts would be just the start of cascading failures. Some experts suggest hospital, factory and fire equipment could grind to a halt. Elevators may not elevate. Since airliners and air traffic controllers depend on computers, flying Jan. 1 is a problematic proposal.

Banking and finance systems



Predictions of the Y2K problem have ranged from "end of the world" to "better learn to reprogram the VCR and microwave."



INDEX STOCK

might also be grounded. Dr. Edward Yardeni, chief economist for Deutsche Bank Securities, believes that because of the Y2K bug, there's "a 70 percent chance of a severe global recession."

Even more fundamental services could be in jeopardy, such as water supplies. And while spuds and winter wheat will surely keep growing on American farms, disruptions in transportation could lead quickly to food shortages. Consequently, a growing number of survivalists have moved to rural areas, stocked up on a year's worth of food and armed themselves with weapons to repel attacks from hungry urban hoards.

Eric Utne, founder of the Utne Reader magazine and publisher of the Y2K Citizen's Action Guide, suggests that the millennium "will be the social equivalent of a worldwide earthquake." Perhaps.

But there are an awful lot of "mights" and "maybes" surrounding Y2K. And what's most ironic is how the problem developed.

Larval Stage. The roots of the Y2K bug reach back to the 1950s, when computers the size of Winnebagos had only a fraction of the capacity found in today's personal devices. Back then,

**'We are
now, in a
sense, at
war with
Y2K.'**

Sen. Robert Bennett, R-Utah

data were stored on strips of punched cardboard, which limited programming space. Scientists who developed the first common programming language decided to devote only six digits to rendering dates — two each for the day,

month and year. No one imagined that versions of that language would still inhabit old systems a half-century hence. Or that out of habit, programmers would continue to use only two digits for years, even as the cost of computer memory became a non-issue. In January's *Scientific American*, author and technology consultant Peter de Jager — one of the first to sound Y2K warnings — admits that "many of us truly believed that the software we were writing would long be retired before the new millennium."

The Y2K bug's infectious nature has already shown up. Boeing, which handles orders with seven-year lead times, first noticed computer errors in 1993. Computerized cash registers crashed on credit cards with expiration dates of "00." And a 100-year-old woman in Minnesota received an automated invitation to attend kindergarten. That may be amusing, but when folks at North American Aerospace Defense Command did a little test in 1993, rolling their

Y2K

computer clocks to Jan. 1, 2000, it wasn't at all funny when the intercontinental ballistic missile alert system went down.

Systems are one problem. Embedded chips are as pervasive and persistent as termites. As de Jager explains, these preprogrammed devices are in traffic lights, navigational tools, security alarms and nuclear power plant control devices. While dates may not seem important to all of these things, the machines could shut down, say, because they think it's been 100 years since the last inspection. Embedded chips are also in medical devices that control chemotherapy and anesthesia doses and intensive care monitors. Mark Neuenschwander, a Colorado physician, recommends avoiding elective surgery during the first half of the next year.

Bug Repellent. For all the hue and cry, American businesses and governments have taken the bug seriously. To reduce liability and keep operations flowing, Citicorp and AT&T have each spent more than a half-billion dollars to weed out problems in advance. Many other Fortune 500 companies are spending similar sums. Even if the Y2K bug is a mere nuisance, it's an expensive nuisance.

Although Bennett warns that "Our government is not going to get all of its

critical systems fixed in time for the century change," many agencies are Y2K ready. The Internal Revenue Service claims it won't miss out on collecting a dime. Agencies that dispense benefits are also attempting to fulfill their obligations.

Last February, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Secretary Togo West Jr. announced that nearly all of VA's mission critical software applications were efficiently producing work with post year-2000 dates. Said West:

"This is a major step that will ensure

'The U.S. is likely the best-prepared country in the world for Y2K.'

our nation's veterans will continue to receive their benefits on time and the highest quality of health care in the year 2000."

Just to be sure of payments and to alleviate fears, VA also intends to de-

posit its first routine year 2000 benefits payments to the accounts of recipients on the morning of Dec. 30, 1999.

That's a Thursday, and it gives folks a chance to get printouts of bank statements before Y2K arrives on Saturday.

Apocalyptic forecasts notwithstanding, the United States is likely the best-prepared country in the world for Y2K. Developing nations – which have large factories and nuclear power plants – are not (the United States and Russia are in talks about nuclear missile security). The U.S. Department of State recently issued an advisory to travelers, warning that "U.S. citizens abroad should not assume that credit cards, ATM machines and international banking transactions will operate normally in all locations throughout the world. Citizens abroad with special medical requirements should not assume that all medical facilities and services will be available."

Prepare. At home, we still could be in for a rough January. Each of us should make some individual Y2K preparations (see "Be Prepared"). "And we should start now," says Matthew Smith, a Chevron Corp. senior analyst assigned to prepare his company and its employees for Y2K. "If people wait until late December to buy batteries, extra food and other supplies, there will be shortages. The bad scenarios will be self-fulfilling prophecies." And what if we prepare and nothing happens? "Every family could do a better job of being ready for a natural disaster," adds Smith. "The effort won't go to waste."

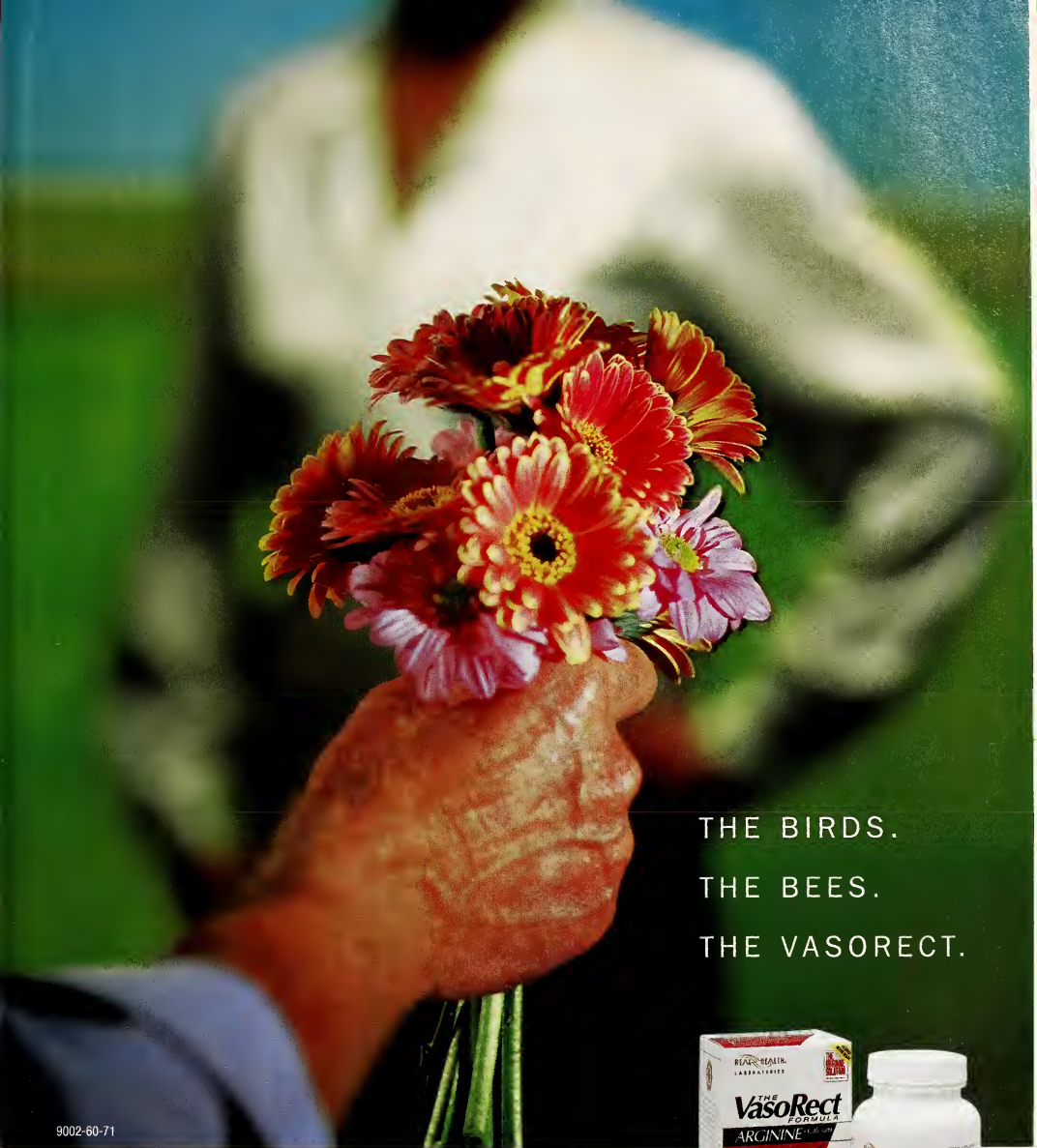
Perhaps the biggest waste has been all the effort that's gone into Doomsday forecasts of citizens attacking each other for fuel and food. Granted, the strident alarms stimulated action. But after virtually every hurricane, blizzard or earthquake that's ever hit, Americans have shown a great capacity to share with and help each other. Many communities throughout the country have already developed local Y2K contingency plans.

This New Year's Eve will be one of the most fascinating of all time, the microelectronic version of waiting to see if an asteroid hits or misses the planet. As ageless Dick Clark presides over the televised festivities in Times Square, we'll watch as the lighted ball slowly drops. If it hits bottom and stays lit, we'll know that by managing the Y2K factor, America has entered a new millennium with a good start. □

Be Prepared

THERE'S A WEALTH of material to help citizens prepare for Y2K. The U.S. government has a consumer hotline (888-USA-4-Y2K) and a Web site (www.y2k.gov). Bookstores have sections devoted to the topic. And the American Red Cross has published books and Y2K checklists for home use. Following are a few recommended basics:

- Stock non-perishable food and fresh drinking water to last at least a week, perhaps two.
- If the power fails, use alternative cooking devices according to manufacturers' instructions. In other words, don't barbecue indoors.
- Stock batteries for flashlights and a transistor radio.
- Have a reasonable sum of extra cash on hand in small denominations, in case credit cards and ATMs are temporarily out of commission.
- In mid-December, acquire hard copies of financial statements from banks and brokerages.
- Secure extra prescription drugs and special medical equipment by mid-December.
- If you buy a portable generator, keep it in a well-ventilated area, and remember it can power only a few items at one time.
- Find out if your community has a Y2K plan; as in any disaster, neighbors typically watch out for each other.



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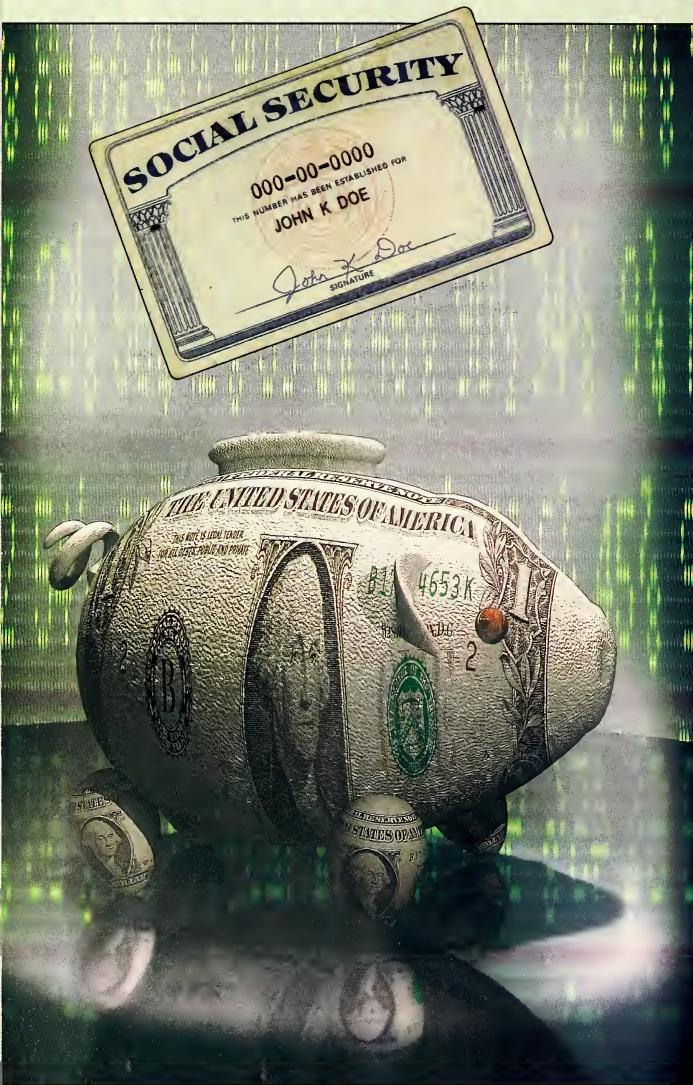
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The Struggle For SOCIAL SECURITY



Should the United States preserve the New Deal-era program or transform Social Security into personal retirement accounts?

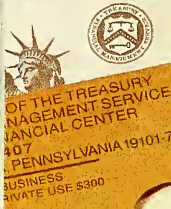
By Donald Lambro

STRIPPED OF ITS emotional and demagogic rhetoric, the war over how to fix Social Security is a struggle between two powerful political forces: Those who want to fundamentally preserve the New Deal program by refinancing it with future government debt and those who wish to transform it into a self-financing, wealth-creating investment system of personally owned retirement accounts.

Seeking to block GOP proposals to use some of the surplus to cut taxes and to finance a transition to personal retirement accounts, President Clinton came up with essentially empty rhetoric last year that urged Congress to use the surplus to "save Social Security first." He talked of "preserving" or "reserv-

Donald Lambro is the chief political correspondent of *The Washington Times*. The syndicated columnist has published five books and has produced and moderated a public affairs program for C-Span.

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These surpluses are seen as the means of fixing the system, but how? This is where it gets tricky and where workers can easily be fooled.

The General Accounting Office complained that the administration's social security proposal was "extremely complex and confusing."

And there has clearly been an attempt on the part of the administration to use some disingenuous definitions. White House officials talk about the program's trust fund as if it is a

ing" the budget surplus to keep the Social Security system solvent for at least the next 30 years. In fact, none of the surplus is preserved, reserved or set aside anywhere. But most of the public bought into the catch phrase and GOP attempts to give some of the surplus back to the workers who earned it were stopped dead in their tracks.

A series of recent studies by the conservative Capitol Hill think tank, the Heritage Foundation, however, showed how middle and lower income workers would receive a much better "rate of return" if they invested their taxes in high quality blue chip stocks or even U.S. Treasury bonds.

One study compared what workers in 13 blue collar professions would earn in private investment accounts vs. the present system. The average 45-year-old miner who was married with two kids would pay \$188,285 in Social Security payroll taxes during his working life and get back \$452,629 in benefits. But if this worker had been permitted to invest his taxes, he would have a retirement nest egg of \$647,943 - a difference of \$195,314.

The battle lines have been drawn.

Growth Curve. In recent years, the idea of privatizing Social Security has slowly gained new adherents as its liabilities mushroomed (it faces a \$20 trillion shortfall over the next 75 years), the number of workers per beneficiary continued to shrink and payroll taxes rose. Also fueling its growth is the realization spreading among the burgeoning "Investor Class" that their return on payroll taxes pales when compared to IRA-type equity funds.

Increasingly, political pollsters began hearing complaints - especially from younger workers - that the Social Security retirement program has

become a financial loser for most workers. One survey found that more people believed they had a better chance of seeing a UFO than getting the benefits due them when they retire. But few political leaders dare to challenge the program's structural integrity and suggest that there must be a better way.

During the last presidential campaign, Steve Forbes suggested the government should begin letting workers put part of their payroll taxes into higher yield stock and bond mutual funds, and promised no one would lose benefits during the transition to the private program. Forbes' polls shot up, and suddenly the idea of creating individual retirement investment accounts was no longer just the purview of moss-backed, libertarian conservatives and free-market think tanks.

Democrats began to embrace it, too. Sen. Daniel Patrick Moynihan, D-N.Y., introduced a plan last year that would let taxpayers set aside 2 percent of their payroll taxes in private investment plans. Sen. Robert Kerrey, D-Nebr., also has a plan to let workers invest part of their taxes into their own retirement funds.

Polls commissioned in the last two years by the Democratic Leadership Council found that strong majorities in both parties backed the idea of being able to "manage your own investment retirement accounts."

Surplus Cash. But the big fiscal development that has pushed the Social Security reform movement faster and further than anyone thought it would ever go has been the surprising budget surpluses that are exploding with each new budget estimate. We are now looking at a surplus of \$4.5 trillion over the next 15 years.

real account where money just sits there on deposit for future retirees. It doesn't. The money from the payroll taxes comes in and goes out, spent to finance Social Security benefits or used for government-wide operational costs of one kind or another. What is left over can be used to pay down the debt, but should it?

The Newest Deal. Now Clinton has come up with a plan to save Social Security as we know it, but it is filled with serious structural flaws that do not address the program's fundamental problems and, in fact, would create new liabilities for future taxpayers. First of all is government ownership of stocks.

Conceding that the stock market is the only place to find a better rate of return on investment than the measly 1 percent to 2 percent return from the Treasury, Clinton wants the government to invest \$650 billion of the program's surplus over the next 15 years in equities.

But his idea was quickly condemned by Federal Reserve Board Chairman Alan Greenspan as dangerous and dumb, inserting political decision-making into the efficient, nonpolitical workings of the markets. "Investing a portion of the Social Security trust fund assets in equities, as the administration and others have proposed, would arguably put at risk the efficiency of our capital markets and, thus, our economy," Greenspan testified earlier this year.

Some saw the specter of the government owning huge stakes in Fortune 500 firms as nothing more than a government takeover of major sectors of the economy. "Government-controlled investment would mean the partial nationalization of major businesses, which would allow



politicians to have direct involvement in the economy and influence over the decisions of individual corporations," says Heritage Foundation chief economist Daniel Mitchell.

The plan, cooked up by Clinton economic adviser Gene Sperling, is going nowhere. House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Bill Archer, R-Texas, declared it "the dumbest idea I've ever heard."

Another downside is using the bulk of the budget surpluses, \$2.8 trillion, to pay down the debt. Clinton and White House officials describe this proposal as "setting aside" the money to shore up the system. In fact, it does nothing more than use the surpluses to buy down the public debt, leaving the trust fund with trillions of dollars in IOUs

that would be redeemed later with new debt to pay for future benefits. This, in turn, would result in higher taxes to pay off that debt, cutting benefits, using general funds for the first time to meet Social Security liabilities or raising the retirement age — or probably all four.

"What the White House is proposing is really not, in that sense, new. The whole notion of the Trust Fund is itself a gimmick to trick the public into thinking that their payroll taxes are being banked for their retirement rather than spent for current consumption," writes Barry Rogstad, in a recent analysis for the American Business Conference.

Notably, there are no proposals in Clinton's plan to deal with Social Security's two biggest problems. It does nothing to provide all American workers with a better rate of return on their payroll taxes. It does nothing to reduce future taxpayer liabilities. "Instead, what we have is a deferral of the day of reckoning," says Rogstad.

If all this were not enough, Clinton has proposed creating another new

government entitlement program, USA Accounts, a scheme to redistribute a portion of the surpluses to a limited group of middle income taxpayers to set up their own retirement accounts. But the plan is unconnected to Social Security or its future reform.

The answer to all of this can be found in the individual retirement plans proposed by Gramm, Moynihan, Kerrey and other privatization reformers in Congress. Each has its differences, but their central purpose is similar and worth doing: To begin letting workers use their payroll taxes to build fully invested retirement plans of their own, weaning them off the Social Security ponzi scheme that we can no longer afford to shore up with subsidies.

A surging economy that shows no signs of slowing down any time soon, and the budget surplus derived from it, gives us the luxury to finance the transition to a private retirement system that will not only benefit every American worker but provide an infusion of capital to ensure that the U.S. economy remains the strongest and most affluent in the world. ☐

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By Cliff Kincaid

Gone Fighting

THE NUMBERS are staggering: From 1950-1989 there were 10 deployments of U.S. troops. In contrast, during the eight-year period from 1990-1998, there were 32 deployments. These numbers, supplied by Rep. Curt Weldon, R-Pa., chairman of a key military subcommittee, demonstrate a "crisis" of historic proportions that is affecting military readiness. It's a "massive train wreck" waiting to happen, he says.

Speaking at a State Department symposium, Weldon contrasted the deployments over the last several years with Operation Desert Storm. The \$52 billion cost of the Gulf War was picked up by other nations, he said, while allied contributions to recent deployments have been "non-existent." He said most of the costs have come out of U.S. military readiness funds.

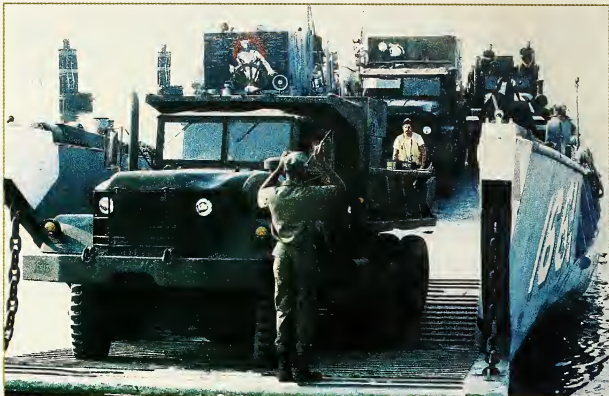
The Navy has been hit particularly hard, he said, with its ship-building program in serious decline. During the 1980s, America's goal was a 600-ship Navy. Today, the total is headed down to 200.

Since many of these deployments are designed to enforce U.N. resolutions in such areas as the Middle East and the former Yugoslavia, Weldon said, Congress has proposed that the United Nations pay more of the bill. But President Clinton has threatened to veto such legislation, Weldon noted.

Prison Labor Taking Jobs

CONCERNED about slave labor-produced imports from Communist China? Your draperies, mattresses, blankets and brooms may be among the 150 products which have been made by prisoners earning as little as \$1.15 an hour at a nearby U.S. federal prison facility. Rep. Patrick J. Kennedy, D-R.I., is outraged, saying convicted criminals are taking the jobs of "thousands of workers, many of them in small businesses."

Federal Prison Industries, also



In the last 10 years, U.S. troop deployments have skyrocketed — triple those made from 1950-1989.

known by its trade name, UNICOR, claims to deliver "total customer satisfaction" while providing "a new beginning" for many federal inmates. Armed with a government mandate, it gets preferential treatment in fulfilling government contracts. At a hearing last year, Sam Brickley of Northwest Woolen Mills in Rhode Island testified he was forced to lay off 50 employees because FPI got a blanket contract over his firm. Kennedy wants the preference eliminated, so private companies can compete for the work. But his legislation has to go through a House subcommittee headed by Bill McCollum, R-Fla., who has his own bill, the "Free Market Prison Industries Reform Act." McCollum says it's wrong for FPI to have a monopoly on the federal prison work force, now numbering 121,000 inmates. His bill would allow private companies to use prison workers, too.

Urban Warfare Training

WHEN the black attack helicopters swooped into Kingsville, Texas, in February, staging raids on abandoned buildings, so many people were taken by surprise that the controversial military exercises got coverage as far away as the New York Times. No one was more surprised than local resident Tomas Sanchez, a military veteran who was referred to on the

Internet as believing the troops had been deployed under a top secret presidential directive. Sanchez denied making any such statement and said he never saw any such document. "If I had seen it, do you think I'd tell them? I'd be locked in a stockade somewhere," he said. "I'm still very loyal. I'm a member of the Legion."

NATO Intrigue

NATO JUST HELD its Washington summit and more former Soviet-bloc countries are scheduled to join. But a series of spy scandals is shaking the foundation of the alliance.

And there's another problem: France wants a price for full reintegration into the alliance, some of NATO's top military commanders to be European, not American.

The latest controversy involved Pentagon suspicions that NATO member Greece may have supplied secret NATO aircraft jamming codes to Russia. Before that, a former U.S. Army clerk was sentenced to 25 years in prison for being a member of a spy ring in Germany which gave Hungarian and Czech agents secret NATO war plans during the 1980s.

Two French officers may have passed NATO military information about Bosnian and Kosovar plans to the Serbs, compromising NATO plans to arrest alleged war criminals and stage air strikes on Serbian areas. □

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SHOULD SOCIAL SECURITY BE PRIVATIZED?

U.S. Sen. Paul Wellstone, D-Minn.



NO BACKERS OF privatization sell it as a pain-free alternative to the unpleasant "tinkering" of cutting benefits and raising taxes. Paying for new privatized accounts actually requires more benefit cuts or tax increases than would otherwise be necessary. The money to pay for these accounts has

to come from somewhere. Specifically, the diversion of tax revenues away from Social Security would inevitably require steep and unnecessary cuts in benefits. Social Security's defined benefit is already a minimum guarantee against poverty in old age. We should not weaken that.

Many privatization plans fund their accounts by increasing retirement age to 70 or above. The American people are overwhelmingly against such a proposal. Of course, there are many other reasons why privatization is a terrible idea. Private accounts would be a bad deal for most seniors. Privatization is being sold as a "get-rich-quick" scheme, and potential returns from stock market investment are being grossly exaggerated. Moreover, administrative costs would be prohibitively high, especially for the smaller accounts of low-income workers, and would eat into retirement savings. And for every senior who earns above-average returns, another would be stuck with below-average returns.

Privatization would take the "security" out of Social Security. What happens when seniors have no choice but to retire in a bear market? This can be a terrifying prospect for low-income workers who have no other retirement savings to fall back on. American seniors deserve a defined benefit, not a lottery ticket.

Privatization would also be regressive. Those with higher incomes and greater experience in financial markets would come out on top. Workers with lower incomes, women, people with disabilities and people of color would be the losers. The progressive anti-poverty features of Social Security would be either diluted or destroyed. Many more seniors would be pushed into poverty.

We should focus on proposals that actually help close Social Security's long-term shortfall without undermining its essential features. For example, we could tap into projected budget surpluses. Or we could raise the "payroll cap," so those earning more than \$68,400 pay at the same rate as everyone else. But we should avoid benefit cuts, and we should specifically avoid raising the retirement age to pay for risky privatization schemes.

We must resolutely reject the full or partial privatization of Social Security. Private accounts would drain resources from Social Security, leaving the current system to "wither on the vine." We must not let that happen. □

U.S. Sen. Phil Gramm, R-Texas



YES IN 1935, politicians filled the air with speeches about a Social Security system in which the trust fund theoretically would save, invest and earn enormous amounts of compound interest – but the system they constructed simply shifted money directly from workers to retirees.

It wasn't what was promised, but it worked brilliantly. In fact, for a long time nobody noticed the difference. With 42 workers for each retiree, Social Security delivered benefits painlessly at first, and it rescued millions of retirees from poverty. But the trust fund never made investments, it earned no interest and it didn't create any wealth. Now just three workers support each retiree, and the 1935 system is slowly caving in on us. That's why we're working to accomplish what the politicians of 1935 tried to do, but didn't.

I want to take the best of Social Security and preserve it. The system is mandatory and universal. It has minimum benefits and family benefits, survivor benefits and death benefits. These things need to be treasured, and saved.

Next, we should start investing. If 3 percentage points of today's 12.4 percent Social Security payroll tax were invested prudently, a 22-year-old entering the workforce next year would never have to depend on anybody else's taxes to pay for his retirement. Every worker should have a real account owned by him, not the government, and those accounts must be carefully regulated for safety and soundness by the government.

Not even including the last five boom years, the experience of the previous 70 years – including the Great Depression and four major recessions – shows that a 3 percent investment will guarantee benefits that outstrip what the current Social Security system would pay. And if low wages, illness or unemployment shortchange a worker when he reaches retirement, Social Security will make good on the promise by supplementing his benefit.

Some say we can salvage the old system if we just raise taxes and cut benefits again, but the cuts needed are so deep they would shred the social fabric of the United States, and the tax increases are so steep they will destroy economic opportunity for young Americans. Taxes and benefit cuts pit parents against children in a war for dwindling resources, and I am against these measures.

The debate over the future of Social Security is about more than numbers, it's about the American people and what we stand for as a nation. With courage, we can guarantee that Social Security will be there for both our parents and our children. □

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Legion Reactivates Family Support Network

WASHINGTON – The American Legion, in reaction to the crisis in Kosovo, reactivated its Family Support Network to help the families of service members involved in air strikes against Kosovo.

"The Family Support Network helps the spouses and children of deployed troops in ways that only a neighbor can – from helping to change an oil filter or watching the kids to relieving the burdens of loneliness," said National Commander Butch Miller in announcing the network's reactivation this spring.

Families of deployed military service members can contact The American Legion's Family Support Network at (800) 504-4098.

Legion representatives will forward requests for assistance to Legionnaires in one of the 15,000 local Posts closest to each caller's community. Then it's up to members from that Legion Post to take the information on the fact sheet they're given about the family's needs, make the contact and render whatever assistance possible.

Representatives of the Legion program work closely with the military's various family-assistance programs to avoid duplicating services provided by the Department of Defense, since DoD has primary responsibility for providing assistance to these families.

Legionnaires last were called to the service of their younger comrades and their families in 1995 when U.S. troops were deployed to Bosnia as part of NATO's peacekeeping force.

The Family Support Network was first launched in 1990 during Operation Desert Shield, and continued through Operation Desert Storm in 1991.

Operators processed more than 30,000 calls, handling



Then-National Commander Robert S. Turner chats with a mother and son who received financial assistance during the Gulf War in 1991.

requests ranging from emergency financial assistance to taking family members to the doctor or the local grocery store. Legionnaires answered the calls for help, proving once again The American Legion is a community-based organization.

"Every man and woman in The American Legion has been in the same position faced today by the families of our Kosovo veterans," Miller said.

"We will pray for their safe return, work the halls of Congress to protect their interests, and roll up our sleeves to take care of their families until they return home."

Resume' Writer Assisting Veterans

AN INTERNET-BASED military resume' writer is available to veterans trying to parlay skills they acquired in the military into civilian job opportunities.

The new system was developed by the Michigan Jobs Commission thanks to a grant from the U.S. Department of Labor's Veterans' Employment and Training Service. A part of America's Talent Bank, the system is available on the Internet at www.VETS-ATB.org.

The resume' writer can translate more than 5,000 military occupations into civilian career objectives, qualifications, skills, experience and training.

"I like this system because it's easy to use," says Espiridon "Al" Borrego, assistant secretary of labor for veterans' employment and training services. "When a veteran inputs a military occupational code, the resume' writer offers professionally written choices for each section of the resume'."

Veterans' occupational codes are available on their Form DD-214 discharge papers. After selecting a civilian equivalent that corresponds to their military experience, veterans go to a veterans' employment representative for help in customizing the resume'. Veterans' employment representatives are located at every state employment service office, and they offer timely labor market information and job counseling, training and placement services.

Veterans, Borrego says, often encounter unnecessary delays entering the civilian labor market because potential employers don't understand which military skills apply to their job needs. "This system gets both sides speaking the same language," Borrego says.

The resume' writer allows employers to access the system and search for applicants who fit their job needs, once the veteran transfers from the Michigan Internet system to America's Job Bank. □

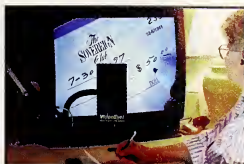
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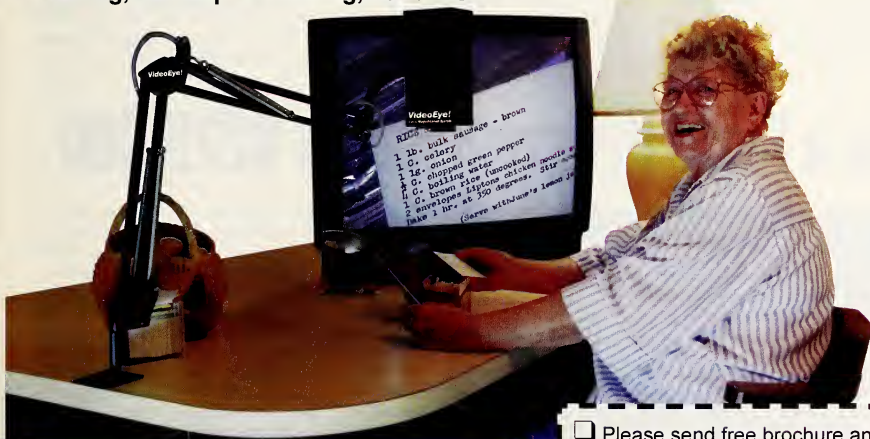


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Project 2000 Building Adds Efficiency

LAWRENCE, Ind. — Ground-breaking ceremonies took place March 9 on The American Legion's "Project 2000," a \$4 million, 65,000 square-foot facility at a site on the former Army post at Fort Benjamin Harrison.

"This is a special day in the history of The American Legion," said National Commander "Butch" Miller at the ground-breaking ceremony, held at the 6-acre site in Lawrence, an Indianapolis suburb.

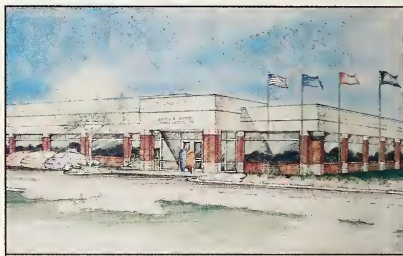
"I want to thank all those who have worked so hard on 'Project 2000' to make this come to pass. We can leave this site today knowing we had a lot to do with the future of The American Legion," Miller said.

When completed later this year, the new office building will house Haynes & Partners Communications, a wholly owned, for-profit subsidiary of The American Legion, The Legion's Marketing Services Group and the National Emblem Sales mail-order catalog operation. Emblem Sales is currently housed at the National Headquarters building in

downtown Indianapolis, while Marketing Services and Haynes & Partners share leased offices at a northwest side complex, Park 100.

Scheduled construction should allow all three operations to move into their new quarters in December. Combined, the three employ 120 people with an annual payroll of more than \$3 million.

Big Savings. Miller cited several reasons behind the move, primarily cost efficiency and operational concerns. First of all, he said, the Marketing Services Group pays \$450,000 a year to lease its current office space, and that figure could be expected to increase substantially when the lease expires in December 2000. Emblem Sales and the Marketing Services Group, currently separated, will operate more efficiently under one



The American Legion's new 65,000 square foot facility will house National Emblem Sales, Haynes & Partners Communications and the Marketing Services Division.

roof since they can share warehouse space, mailing operations, toll-free phone and trunk lines, and order entry services. The new site also gives these important American Legion operations room to grow.

To top it off, Miller said, Haynes & Partners declared in January a dividend of \$400,000 that was applied to the down payment for the project.

— Tony Miller

'Give a Buck' Program Raises \$225,000



Legionnaires, including then-9th District Commander "Huck" Arneson of Minnesota (right), helped out during devastating 1997 flooding of the Red River in East Grand Forks, Minn. The NEF contributed nearly \$700,000 to flood victims.

NATIONAL Commander Harold "Butch" Miller's "Give-a Buck" fund-raising initiative for The Legion's National Emergency Fund raised more than \$225,000 in its first six months. Miller kicked off the effort at the 1998 National Convention in New Orleans.

Many have given their fair share, but some American Legion Posts went well above and beyond the call of duty. Post 303 in Fridley, Minn., donated \$10,000 to the NEF. In recognition

of the donation, the National Commander in February presented a display case to Post officials bearing a United States flag that flew over the U.S. Capitol Jan. 6.

Every dollar contributed to the NEF is used to render direct financial assistance to Legion family members.

Most importantly, the grants are given based on need, with no repayment necessary.

Those wishing to donate should send National Emergency Fund contributions to their local Posts, or directly to The American Legion National Emergency Fund, P. O. Box 6141, Indianapolis, IN 46206.

For more information, call NEF Coordinator Michelle Steinmetz at (317) 630-1328.

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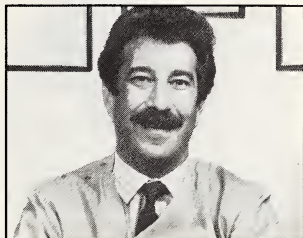
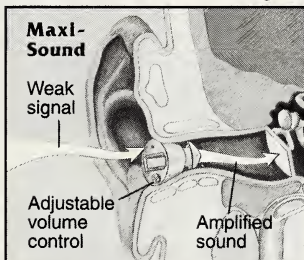
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M. Howard, Hearing Aid Dispenser

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provided their service to the country was faithful and honorable. National Guard and Reservists are eligible, as are current active duty military or civilian employees. Active duty military should apply through their chain of command.

Contractors and volunteers are not eligible. A telephone help line is available at (703) 275-6279.

VETS' FUNERAL PLAN PRESENTED TO CONGRESS

A DEPARTMENT of Defense plan to improve the present system of military funeral honors to include the presence of a uniformed military member for the flag presentation went before Congress in April.

The proposed plan would require the military services, upon request of the next of kin, to provide funeral honors at the burial of a veteran. The honors would include a team of at least two persons to conduct a flag-folding ceremony and present the flag to the family. At least one of the team members will be a uniformed representative of the

veteran's parent service who will present the flag. The plan also requires a live or recorded rendering of "Taps."

The 1999 Defense Authorization Act requires the DoD either to submit a federal honors plan acceptable to Congress, or starting Jan. 1, 2000, to provide a three-person honor guard and the ability to play "Taps" at the funeral of any veteran.

DOD CHANGES SHOT POLICY

SERVICE MEMBERS, DoD emergency essential civilian employees and contractors must now receive anthrax vaccinations if they'll spend any time in one of 10 high-threat areas. Previously, only DoD personnel who were deploying for more than 30 days to a high-threat area had to start the six-shot vaccine series.

The Pentagon identifies high-threat areas as Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Jordan, Yemen, Korea and Israel. Officials say DoD initially set the 30-day threshold to help get the immunization program established and to make sure there was enough vaccine on hand.



CONSEQUENCES OF BASE CLOSURES

COMMUNITIES impacted by military base closures have been able to get back three-fifths of jobs lost through the closings. That's according to Paul Dempsey, the chief of the Pentagon's Office of Economic Adjustment. Dempsey says if Congress approves two new rounds of base closures, the communities that would be affected would probably do even better than those in the four rounds since 1988. Congress has approved legislation allowing DoD to transfer — or convey — facilities and buildings to local communities.

"With the economy booming, now is the time for communities to re-utilize military bases," Dempsey says. □

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VETS® is a private veterans program that provides The American Legion with information about reunions, helps veterans locate old buddies and offers other special benefits and services to veterans and their families.

REUNION INFORMATION

This month we have listed many groups that are planning reunions. Information is provided free to Legion members and other veterans who write VETS and enclose the 5-digit VETS number of each reunion. VETS maintains reunion and contact information for more than 12,000 outfits. Reunion information is also available at no charge on the Internet at www.vets.org. Many libraries and schools will provide Internet access free for veterans with no Internet access or computer skills. We regret that due to call volume we cannot accept phone requests for reunion information. See "How to Use VETS Services" below.

OUTFIT ENROLLMENT IS FREE

Coordinators may list reunion information with VETS at no charge. Information may be submitted electronically via the VETS website or on official forms by writing VETS®. Individuals planning new reunions or offering themselves as points of contact for possible new reunions may also register at no charge.

THE NATIONAL VETS® ARCHIVES

The National VETS Archives is a free historical registry for veterans who want to be listed on the VETS roster for each outfit in which they served. Registration is free but to ensure accuracy, must be on official archive forms. Registration may be done electronically at the VETS Internet home page. VETS uses the archives to develop historical rosters and reunion contact information. Deceased veterans may be enrolled posthumously by a family member.

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VETS® BENEFITS

Veterans who enroll in the National VETS Archives are eligible for a variety of products and services offered by VETS. Veterans who qualify automatically receive notices about their outfit reunions, free or discounted Finders/Seekers services and other VETS consumer benefits. In most cases, VETS benefits can be extended to other family members and the survivors of deceased veterans. Details are available on the VETS website or by writing VETS.

HOW TO USE VETS® SERVICES

To promote better accuracy and faster response, and except for reunion information requests, official VETS forms should be used to submit information or request other services. Forms are available free on the VETS website at www.vets.org or they may be obtained by writing VETS at P.O. Box 501, Columbia, MO 65205-0901 and enclosing a self-addressed, stamped #10 (long) reply envelope. VETS normally responds to all written requests the next business day. To keep costs low and still handle thousands of requests each week, VETS does not accept phone calls for reunion information. In an emergency, messages about other services may be left on the VETS voice mail system 24 hours a day at (573) 474-4444. You can also reach VETS via e-mail at admin@vets.org.

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ARMY AIR FORCE

2nd Combat Cat Sq (WWII CBI) #23649 4th Engr Rescue Sq (SW Pacific, WWII) #19099 58th AF 8th Ftr Gr, 8th Ftr Wg, HQ 8th Ftr CNTC 33.36.80 FRT Sq #23892 8th AF 381st Bomb Grp (H) Maitland (Eng WWII) #10245 9th AF 381st Bomb Grp (AUSN) (WWII) #10717 7th ASG, 390th Ftr Sqr, 3rd Ftr Bn, 381st Bomb Grp (H) Vets Assn #90-256, Solomons/PI, WWII) #20882 31st Bomb Grp (H) USAAF #22748 15th AF, 485th Bomb Grp (Venosa, Italy, WWII) #19052 19th Bomb Grp Assn #10598 20th Ftr Grp Assn #12584 22nd Bomb Grp (H), 1st Bomb Grp (M) (CBI, WWII) #222nd Ftr Bn, 1st Bomb Grp (H) (WWII) #1989 17th Ftr Wg, Hq 8th AF #16759 11th Tac Recon Sq (H) #16752 406th Ftr Bn (WWII) #16740 439th TC Grp, 53rd TC Sq (WWII) #15630 504th Bomb Grp Assn (WWII) #20855 9th Engr Avt Maint Co, 100th Engr Avt Co (AFSAF) #24544 1st Engr Avt Maint Co, 100th Engr Avt Co (WWII) #19537 ATC Eur EurDI (All AFAFB Personnel, WWII) #13959 Century College Training Detach (LA, WWII) #24267 7th 1st TAC AF (Prov WWII) #19415 Los Angeles Air Defense Wing (Fr, Spring Summer 1953) #24276 Flt Class Detachment #19415 1st AF Walker AFB Vets Assn (Ind Civilian, 41-57) #11570

AIR FORCE

3rd Ares (Yokota, Japan/62-65) **25283 8th AF**, 1st SdA (Honington/Trenton, Eng, 42-45) **13523 8th AF**, 7th Photo Recon Grp (MI Farm & Chalgrove, Eng) **10597 9th AF Assn**, inc (Incl AAF) **19017 56th Fr Grp** (Incl SdP Supp, 41-Now) **15072 58th** (All Years) **10890 60th & 7150th Air Police** **24250 98th Bomb Grp/Wing Assn** (All Years) **319th Bomb Wing**, 478th & 940th Trans Sq (Grand Forks AFB, ND / 61-65) **24277 340th Bomb Wing** (SAC, B-47, KC-97 & S Supp Units, Whiteman AFB, 53-62) **23602 401st Tac Fg** **55th**, 612th/613th/614th/615th (England/AFA, LA) **24272 55th SAW BN** & 1st SAW Sq **31352 582nd Air Resupply Grp** **21556 51st Bomb Wing** (Incl 1st SdP, 42-45) **2408th 6th Flt**, 2408th 6th Flt, Flying Circus, 1942-45 (Hawking, 1972) **2408th 6th Flt**, Flying Circus, 1942-45 (Hawking, 1972) **12893 887th Tac Mst Sq**, C Flight (Grunstadt, Germany) **11388 1503rd MStS & ATW** (Hofeudt AFB, 42-45)

Tokoyo Japan/48-56) #20394 **3080th ADS** & 11th AFDS
(Caribou AF8, ME 1950-1960) #11981 **Photo Mapping Assn**
#20426 **Tan Son Nhut Air Base Assn** #11742 **USAF C-7A**,
Caribou Reunion #24282 **USAFSS, 6926th RSM, Detach 2**
#24252 **Women in the AF (WAF, Enlisted)** #13904

ARMY

[illegible]

(WWII) #10330 **1933r FA** (1st Inr, 108th FA BN) #11087
 215th Chem Corps #22451 **233r Engr Cn** (BN) (WWII) #15572
 240th Coast Art (Fort Williams, ME) #24275 **245th Sig Bn**
 (WWII) #24293 **270th Engr Cn** (B, C & WW) #15945
 284th Engr Bn (WWII) #15946 **284th Engr Bn**
 371st Engr Cns BN (WWII) #16621 **373th AAA Bn** #10465
 385th AAA Avn BN (WWII) #16189 **443rd AAA Avn Bn**
 717th 533rd ESB Cn, R, 1461st Engr Maint Co #24275
 524th Engr Bn (WWII) #15946 **524th Engr Bn**
 Guineap (PI 44-46) #15514 **544th Engr Co** (PI Erwin CA,
 Vietnam, 1968-1968) #2424 **588th Maint Co** (Chu Li VN 67-
 71) #26055 **527th Inf Ret Co** (WWII) #10006 **550th Engr**
 Bn (WWII) #15946 **550th Engr Bn**
 TD Bn #15915 **754th Railway Shop Bn** #16253 **755th Trans**
Railway S Bn (Korea) #21880 **821st Engr Avn Bn, A Co**
 (WWII) #15572 **836th Engr Avn Bn** #10973 **843rd Sig Serv**
 Bn (WWII) #15946 **843rd Sig Serv Bn**
 #21186 **1123rd MP Cn** #12203 **1633rd Army Engr Photo**
Mapping Pln (Oregon, Hawaii, Guam, Japan) #24281
 343rd Dr MAM Co (WWII) #16057 **524 Amphib Truc Co**
 (WWII) #15946 **524 Amphib Truc Co**
 (Kumming, China) #24255 **IFV Army** (Inf Assn &
 Units, VN 66-72) #13095 **Martelli's Marauders** Assn.
 5307th 475th Inf Sup Grps (WWII) #15476 **DCS Engr**, All
 Co's (WWII, Korea, Viet Nam) #15476 **154th of the 1st Inf Div**,
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COAST GUARD

USCGC Mackinaw WAGB-83 Assn #18919 USS Callaway APA-35 (Incl Navy) #17058 USS Gen MC Meigs AP-116 #20797

MARINES

1st Mar Div, 1st Rgt, 1st Bn, A Co (Korea, 50-53) #24260 1st Mar Div, 1st Scout/Recon Co (WWII) #21893 1st Mar Div, 5th Rgt, 2nd Bn, E Co (Korea, 50-54) #10361 2nd USMC, WD Class of 1961 #24255 4th Mar Div, "Fighting 4th" (WWII) #17223 9th Det, 9th AAA Bn (WWII) #17143 HMR (L) 261 (1954-1961) #24234 Mar Air Warn Sq 7d/MGCIS-7/MACS-7 Assn #17190 Marine Security Guard Det, American Embassy, Paris #21894 MCRD San Diego: Plin 1187 (Fall of 1969) #24268 Mustang Assn (Active/Reserve/Vets) #17209 USF Philippine Sea CV-47 (Mar Det) #15807 VMFSB/VNTR-332 (WWII) #13115

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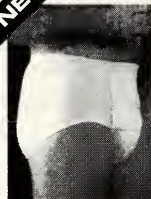
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— News reports

That'll Teach You

I believe in higher things now. I was spared. (Sixteen-year-old Josh Rempel of Calgary, who dramatized his non-belief during a religious argument with his mother by stating "May God strike me down with lightning." The next day he was hit by lightning.)

— Canadian Press

Watch What You Say

I get in a lot of trouble if I'm quoted, especially if the quotes are accurate (A U.S. congressional staff member explains to a reporter why he can speak only off the record).

— Newsweek

Just Vote, Already

Do I know what's in this bill? Are you kidding? Only God knows what's in this conference report.

— Sen. Robert Byrd, D-W.Va., on 1998's 4,000-page omnibus spending bill

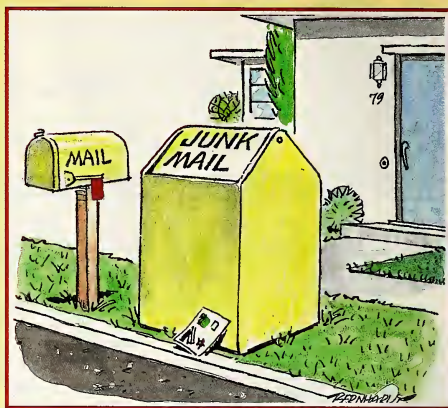
Udderly Unethical

When Nebraska Gov. E. Benjamin Nelson named milk the state's official beverage, People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals objected because, they said, cow milk belongs to calves, not people.

— USA Today

Is That Fiddle Loaded?

Jack Benny was invited to visit the White House. A guard stopped him and asked what he had in the violin case



he was carrying. "A machine gun," said Benny solemnly. With the same solemnity, the guard said, "Oh, okay, enter. I was afraid for a moment that it was your violin."

— Henry O. Dorman, *The Speaker's Book of Quotations*

Apologies

After the Royals defeated the Cardinals in the 1985 World Series, President Reagan phoned the Kansas City locker room and spoke to (Dan) Quisenberry the Royals' star (relief pitcher). The president mistakenly called him Jim.

A week later, the Royals were invited to the White House Rose Garden, at a time when the president's differences with his chief of staff, Don Regan, were well publicized. The president apologized to Quisenberry for getting his first name wrong. Quisenberry replied, "That's OK, Don."

— Richard Goldstein, *New York Times*



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